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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 19, 2020, at 9 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2020

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Holy God, we love You. You are our strength, rock, and protection. Use our Senators today to make our Nation safer and better. May they often think of the positive legacy they can lead through faithful service to You and country.

Lord, remind them that You have brought our Nation through much greater difficulties than the ones we now face. As they strive to unite for the common good of this land we love, may they embrace Your promise that You will never leave or forsake us.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LOEFFLER). The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 1 minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the Trump administration wants the U.S.-Mexico-Canada agreement to enter into force by June 1. I am eager, as well, for that to happen, but we must first ensure that Canada and Mexico are complying with their commitments under that agreement.

I am especially concerned that the June 1 date presents unique challenges for the U.S. oil industry, when it is already facing significant supply chain disruptions due to COVID-19.

As we learned in 2009, the health of the auto industry is critical to the health of the entire American economy. I urge the administration to take very seriously the concerns expressed by the highest level of the auto industry to ensure a reasonable timeline for entry into force of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada agreement auto regulations.

It would be prudent right now to let these companies focus instead on the health of their workforce and supply chains.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, every day our country grows more affected by the continued spread of the coronavirus. Every American is feeling the anxiety and uncertainty of this national challenge—older Americans and young Americans, healthy Americans and those with underlying medical conditions, parents, teachers, working Americans, and small business owners, certainly, our first responders and healthcare professionals. Everyone—everyone—is impacted in different ways and to different degrees, but all Americans are affected.

All of us have seen our daily lives transformed in what feels like the blink of an eye. That is the bad news, and it is the good news too. We are all in this together—all in it together. Our Nation faces this serious challenge, but working together we can take bold steps to combat it.

Earlier this month, Congress passed billions in urgent funding for public health and small businesses, and this Senate majority remains committed to taking further bold steps to preserve and protect the economic foundations of our country.

Later today, the Senate will vote on a House proposal that seeks to address one small piece of the problem before us. It is a well-intentioned, bipartisan product assembled by House Democrats

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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